STAR WARS
REBELLION

"PILOT"

by

Michael Kirkbride & Kurt Kuhlmann

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STAR WARS: REBELLION

"Pilot"

ACT ONE

FADE IN:

TITLE CARD
A long time ago in a galaxy far, far away....

EXT. SPACE

A vast sea of stars serves as the backdrop for the main title, followed by a roll-up, which crawls into infinity:

REBELLION
Season One

A New Order has overthrown the Old Republic. The evil GALACTIC EMPIRE holds a thousand thousand worlds in a grip of tyranny, and only a few systems dare to oppose their forces.

Against all hope, rag-tag bands of freedom fighters, scattered across the galaxy, struggle against the Emperor and his sinister agents.

Though they are ill equipped, disorganized, and few in number, these groups have nonetheless encouraged other worlds to join in their rebellion. They have been heard. They have fought back. And if they fall, the galaxy will tremble at their passing….

PAN DOWN to Bestine, a serene green-blue planet set against the silence of the stars. The flaming remains of a massive escort carrier tumbles into view and EXPLODES.

MULTIPLE RADIO VOICES ERUPT as WE TURN to a scene of complete chaos. An *Imperial*-class Star Destroyer, the *Reprisal,* is blasting away at several vessels of a Townowi convoy.

ON one starship in particular, CONVOY VESSEL ALPHA.

CONVOY VESSEL ALPHA (V.O.)
Repeat: it is an ambush. An *Interdictor*-class--

Convoy Vessel Alpha EXPLODES.

CONVOY VESSEL BETA (V.O.)
Refugee-One, we are under heavy fire. Aft shields are vapor.

Another Star Destroyer, the *Atonement*, LOOMS INTO VIEW and launches its fighters.

More vessels of the Townowi convoy drop out of hyperspace and quickly take evasive maneuvers, trying to avoid the debris. *REFUGEE-ONE*, the convoy leader, launches its own complement of war-torn Z-95 Headhunters to fend off the Imperial fighters.

Two waves launch, the second scattering as another Townowi convoy vessel, ESCORT-TWO, suddenly drops out of hyperspace.

Z-95 LEADER (V.O.)
Refugee-One, we are engaging enemy fighters.

REFUGEE-ONE (FEMALE V.O.)
Roger, Headhunter. Squadron B form a screen at mark ten. There’s another Star Destroyer on that side.

Z-95 B-TWO (V.O.)
Yes, Commander. Get our escorts out of here.

REFUGEE-ONE (FEMALE V.O.)
You just hold them back, Blue-2.

Z-95 LEADER
Remember Townowi, boys.

The Headhunters make a pass on a wave of Imperial fighters, crippling a few, and circling behind the others. More fighters veer in from their flank.

Z-95 Leader is shot apart by laserfire.

INT. *REFUGEE-ONE* – BRIDGE

Townowi officers are watching the battle outside from the bridge of *Refugee-One*. Commander TET DESTRI, severe yet shaken, tries to keep the panic out of her voice as she relays her orders over the subspace radio. R-1 COMM, a communications cyborg, and THAK, her young aide, are next to her, watching the tactical grid.

DESTRI
Are all vessels accounted for?

R-1 COMM
We still have two cruisers in hyperspace.

THAK
Civilian escorts, Commander.

DESTRI
How are they pulling the convoy out of hyperspace?

R-1 COMM
(not answering her)
They’re here.

EXT. SPACE BATTLE – ABOVE BESTINE

The two civilian cruisers drop from hyperspace into the fray. They are immediately targeted by the *Reprisal*. The Star Destroyer’s turbolasers score a direct hit and CRUISER 1 EXPLODES.

CRUISER 2 ambles away from the blast, caught in the shockwave, inadvertently heading into a wing of enemy fighters, which EXPLODE LIKE FIRECRACKERS along its hull. Its shields fail and more turbolaser fire rends Cruiser 2

INT. *REFUGEE-ONE* – BRIDGE

The bridge of *Refugee-One* is LIT BY THE EXPLOSION of Cruiser 2.

THAK
We've lost both of them, Commander. Wait.

When the explosion clears, a third Imperial starship can be seen in the distance: an *Interdictor*-class cruiser. Similar to but smaller than a Star Destroyer, its hull bulges in places with gravity-well projectors.

DESTRI
I already see it, Thak. An *Interdictor.* Blue-Three, I need your wing to take out the *Interdictor*'s gravity-well projectors.

R-1 COMM
More TIE fighters coming into range.

DESTRI
That's what pulled us into this, and that's what's keeping us here. Blue-Three?

Z-95 A-5 answers over the radio.

Z-95 A-5 V.O.)
There is no Blue-Three, *Refugee-One*. Squadron B is out of this one.

THAK
We are receiving a transmission from one of the Star Destroyers.

Z-95 A-5 (V.O.)
We might be able to tackle that *Interdictor*, Commander.

THAK
They are demanding our surrender.

Commander Destri looks from him to a readout of the *Interdictor* to the tactical grid. She stares at the digital image of Bestine, despite the fact that the planet itself fills most of the view outside the bridge. R-1 Comm anticipates her decision.

R-1 COMM
Bestine is neutral, Commander Destri.

DESTRI
Nobody's neutral. Negative, A-5, pull out of that mess. All craft, flee towards the planet. Do not attempt to enter hyperspace again and flee towards the planet.

EXT. SPACE BATTLE – ABOVE BESTINE

The remains of the Townowi convoy speed toward Bestine. *Refugee-One* picks off a few Imperial fighters and descends herself.

The Star Destroyers rain down fire around them. ESCORT 2's shields give out. Another ION BLAST disables her.

The STRIKE CRUISER *PELTAST* moves to her aid but is similarly disabled.

INT. STAR DESTROYER *ATONEMENT* – BRIDGE

From the bridge of the Star Destroyer *Atonement* ADMIRAL TITUS MEDE and CAPTAIN VEEJA survey the damage. A grave-looking man of middle age, Mede exudes confidence and authority. He commands his men with a casual supremacy.

MEDE
Move to intercept that cruiser, Captain.

VEEJA

Right, Admiral. Shall we recall our fighters?

The Star Destroyer *Reprisal* EMERGES INTO VIEW on the *Atonement*'s starboard side.

Beyond the two disabled starships, the rest of the Townowi convoy is accelerating towards Bestine.

MEDE
No, but halt their chase. Deploy them into blockade patrols.

Suddenly the *Reprisal* opens fire, obliterating Escort 2.

Admiral Mede, at first startled by the blast, becomes furious. Captain Veeja looks at a computer monitor.

MEDE (CONT'D)
They've done that for the last time! Who is in command of that destroyer?

VEEJA
That is the *Reprisal*, Admiral. That would be...Captain Bulloc. She got here almost immediately after we put out the alert.

MEDE
Tell the Captain to cease fire at once. And get him on holo.

A bluish hologram of CAPTAIN BULLOC comes to life at the center of the bridge. He seems to be conferring to someone OFF-SCREEN, presumably on the bridge of the *Reprisal*.

BULLOC
(turning to face Mede)
I cannot comply with that request, Admiral.

MEDE
You <u>will</u> refrain from firing on that strike cruiser, Captain Bulloc--

Admiral Mede is interrupted as another hologram materializes beside Bulloc. The imposing image of the Sith

Lord DARTH VADER, his face obscured by flowing black robes and grotesque breath mask, stands before the Admiral. A lightsaber hangs from the Dark Lord's belt. The officers of the *Atonement* are taken aback.

VADER
The Captain was following my orders, Admiral, as will you. There are plenty of cruisers in that convoy and we only need one of them.

Admiral Mede considers the situation briefly. He then narrows his eyes.

MEDE
I am the ranking officer here, Lord Vader, and Captain Bulloc may fire again when I tell him to do so. Right now he will follow standard blockade formation alongside the *Interdictor*. The *Atonement* is moving to intercept that cruiser. I'll have no more of your senseless butchery.

VADER
I'll warn you once, Admiral. The Townowi are traitors and part of the Rebel Alliance. These vessels carry military targets.

MEDE
As well as their civilian families.

VADER
Shall I inform the Emperor of your bouts of conscience?

MEDE
If the Emperor had any misgivings about me, I'm sure I wouldn't have been called out here to begin with.

VEEJA
(into a comm port)
Prepare for docking procedures.

MEDE

I'll have the coordinates for the Rebel Base for you in a moment, Lord Vader. Good day to you, sir. Try not to hinder our progress further.

Admiral Mede cuts the holograms off.

EXT. SPACE BATTLE – ABOVE BESTINE

The Star Destroyer *Atonement* moves toward the disabled Strike Cruiser *Peltast*.

INT. STRIKE CRUISER *PELTAST* – BRIDGE

On the bridge of the Strike Cruiser *Peltast*, the STRIKE CRUISER CAPTAIN, HOCCE BRE, and his officers are defeated. They call up *Refugee-One* on their vidscreen.

CAPTAIN BRE
Cruiser to *Refugee-One*, we're not going to make it.

EXT. SPACE BATTLE – ABOVE BESTINE

REFUGEE-ONE gets farther from the Imperial Star Destroyers. In the background, the *Atonement* is nearly docked with the Strike Cruiser *Peltast*.

DESTRI (V.O.)
We cannot let them have those coordinates, Captain Bre.

CAPTAIN BRE (V.O.)
Don't worry, Commander, we know what to do.
(beat)
If you see my daughter, tell her I was sorry.

INT. *REFUGEE-ONE* – BRIDGE

Commander Destri, R-1 Comm, and Thak watch the docking on the tactical grid. Destri will not look at the Strike Cruiser captain on the nearby vidscreen.

DESTRI
There was no time, Captain Bre. She knew that.

CAPTAIN BRE
Tell her anyway, Commander. TDF Strike Cruiser *Peltast* out.

DESTRI
May the Force be with you.

EXT. SPACE BATTLE – ABOVE BESTINE

Just as the Strike Cruiser begins to enter the maw of the *Atonement*'s hangar bay, it SELF-DESTRUCTS. The Star Destroyer is forced back from the explosion, its lower central levels damaged heavily and alive with fire. KLAXON ALARMS SOUND.

INT. *REFUGEE-ONE* – BRIDGE

Destri and her officers watch the flaming wreckage of the *Peltast* fall away from the damaged Star Destroyer. The Commander nods silently once, then quickly turns to R1-COMM.

DESTRI
Send a distress call to Bestine and inform them of our situation. Make sure all vessels enter the atmosphere as fast as possible.

R1-COMM
On it.

DESTRI
And if they say no, we're landing anyway.

INT. STAR DESTROYER *ATONEMENT* – BRIDGE

The bridge of the *Atonement* pitches against the inertial tide of the explosion, and all aboard scramble for a handhold.

All except for Admiral Mede, who grimly surveys the damage. The hologram imager tries to activate itself, a flickering image of Darth Vader.

MEDE
Don’t let that damn thing come online, Captain. I don’t want to talk to him yet.

Veeja taps out a small sequence on a nearby control panel. The hologram of Vader winks out.

VEEJA
Yessir. Subspace radio damage, of course.

MEDE
Of course. Now, what about our real status?

VEEJA
The hangar dock is gone. Worse yet, our engine column has ruptured, and we’ve lost the automatic sealing fields in levels fifty-nine through forty. Engineering is on it now.

MEDE
Awful. We’ll sit here for weeks.

A TECHNICIAN from the main communications array looks up to Admiral Mede.

TECHNICIAN
Admiral, sir, the *Reprisal* is scanning us. Damage assessment, I believe.

MEDE
Suddenly our subspace radio is fixed. Appreciate the small miracles. Let Lord Vader through.

Vader materializes on deck. Behind his image, and beyond the bridge port windows, the *Reprisal* sits waiting.

VADER
Perhaps now your sympathies have lessened, Admiral. The *Atonement* is crippled. I am in command now.

MEDE
I regret having to point out the obvious, milord, but the *Atonement*'s communications array is fully functional. Otherwise I could not pull the leash again on your admirable zeal. You will not deviate from your present course, Darth Vader.

VADER
I will not let the Rebels find sanctuary on Bestine, Admiral.

MEDE
Neither will I.

VEEJA
I hate to interrupt, but we are receiving a transmission from Bestine now.

Another image materializes on the bridge, PROVOST SEVAS of Bestine, in full merchant house regalia. The Provost tries to match Mede's self-assuredness.

PROVOST SEVAS
The sovereign system of Bestine hereby makes it known to the Galactic Empire that the Townowi refugees are under our protection until a fair and impartial investigation is undertaken by the Senate.

VADER
Provost Sevas, spare us your Mining Guild affectations. If you plan to harbor known agents of the Rebel Alliance then likewise prepare for planetary bombardment.

MEDE
I must agree with Lord Vader on this matter, Provost. You would do well to stay out of this one.

PROVOST SEVAS
Unless you have a commission on hand, do not threaten me, sirs. Your fighters and transports will refrain from entering our atmosphere or they will be fired upon.

VADER
Any hostilities brought to bear--

MEDE
The Empire agrees to this temporary settlement. The Imperial Senate will be in contact with you shortly, Provost Sevas. Good day to you.

The Provost flickers out. Mede turns to Vader.

VADER
Admiral Mede, you are endangering our mission. The Emperor--

MEDE
--will soon have my full report. The Townowi cannot escape our blockade, and I will not go against any charter member world of the Mining Guild until I have his leave. Their influence on the Senate floor is considerable. I will not jeopardize the Emperor's name here. Captain Veeja, recall all fighters and contact the replenishment fleet to repair my ship.
(To Vader)
That is all.

Vader flickers out.

INT. *REFUGEE-ONE* - BRIDGE

On the bridge of *Refugee-One*, Commander Destri and Thak watching as the green-blue mass of Bestine grows closer. R1-Comm looks over.

R1-COMM
I assume you heard the Provost, Commander.

DESTRI
I did. Send along our gratitude.

THAK
And request docking procedures.

R1-COMM
We are receiving them now. I will relay them to our other vessels.

DESTRI
We'll need to get in contact with our senator on Coruscant.

THAK
(moving to exit)
I'll have an encrypted transmission line for us soon, Commander.

EXT. BESTINE SPACEPORT – DAY

Bestine's spaceport is an industrial panoply set to a mammoth scale. Beat-up imitation Bespin Motors Cloud Cars vector in towards the Townowi convoy to guide their descent.

CLOUD CAR PILOT (V.O.)
Welcome to Bestine, Commander Destri. We have a hangar array waiting for you. Please follow our vector.

R1-COMM (V.O.)
Will do.

The hangar array is circular in fashion, a concave hemisphere set into the surface of a plasticrete trapezoid. The center of the hemisphere is so wide as to be a level surface, its edges sloping gently upwards until they reach

the massive open cavities of the individual hangar bays.

Refugee-One and the other Townowi vessels cut their sublight engines and allow tractor beams to bring them into their separate bays. A repulsor transport slides gently down into the hemisphere, carrying soldiers of the Bestine militia.

A Cloud Car lands in the center of the array. Provost Sevas debarks, followed by his personal bodyguards.

INT. BESTINE- *REFUGEE-ONE* HANGAR BAY – DAY

Refugee-One's hangar bay is filled with activity, as Townowi and Bestine engineers begin damage control on the *Refugee-One*. Power cords are attached and reattached to portable energy cells. Archaic spiral staircases reach up into the second level control rooms: comm centers, technical consoles, emergency quarantine chambers.

Tet Destri exits the *Refugee-One*. Thak is close by her, as well as R1-Comm and a sentry pod-droid, FD-81675. At a nod from the Commander, Efdee exposes his sensor array.

Provost Sevas enters the hangar bay. Those Bestine engineers that see him stop what they're doing and salute. Sevas marches up to Destri.

PROVOST SEVAS
Commander, you must realize this haven is a provisional affair.

DESTRI
Townowi thanks you, nevertheless. And we do appreciate the danger you've put yourself in, Provost.

PROVOST SEVAS
I don't know how long the Mining Guild can stall the Senate, but you have the full resources of our supply depots at your disposal in the meantime.

DESTRI

Thank you again, Provost. My ship's communications station has been damaged severely.

Provost Sevas motions to the control rooms above.

PROVOST SEVAS
Feel free then to use our comm center. It runs on a skip-trace channel. The Empire should not be able to intercept your messages.

Destri hesitates, then bows.

DESTRI
Your assistance is truly--

PROVOST SEVAS
I suggest that you hasten contact with your councilor on Coruscant. Don't misinterpret my aid as altruism, Commander Destri. No one is neutral.

DESTRI
(beat)
Of course not, Provost.

EXT. SPACE - NEAR CORUSCANT

ON CORUSCANT, the central system of the Galactic Empire, a dull brown globe decorated with veins of light. A city stretches across it from pole to pole.

Countless starships orbit the planet as a contingent of Star Destroyers and Nebulon-B Frigates stand guard.

EXT. CORUSCANT - IMPERIAL SENATE - DAY

PAN ACROSS the cityscape of Coruscant to the Imperial Senate, a large, distinctive-looking domed building surrounded by monolithic statues of New Order dignitaries.

INT. IMPERIAL SENATE - DELEGATION CHAMBER - DAY

SENATOR ANTILLES, ancient and tranquil, is gazing out over the vast sprawl of Imperial City.

A protocol droid, TK-299, enters the delegation chamber and bows.

TK-299
Senator Kolomo of Townowi to see Senator Antilles, the Honorable Representative of Alderaan.

Senator Antilles nods. TK-299 bows again and leaves. SENATOR KOLOMO enters. He is a beleaguered man, with a darkness in his eyes. He seems to be trembling when he presses the door controls and seals the delegation chamber. Senator Antilles takes a seat at the table.

SENATOR KOLOMO
(nervously)
Should we talk out on the balcony?

SENATOR ANTILLES
We’re safe here. Sit.

SENATOR KOLOMO
The Senate Assembly is over. The bailiffs have called for a postponement on the issue. Whatever that will entail.

SENATOR ANTILLES
There is no issue here, Senator. The postponement is the Mining Guild grandly posturing in front of the Emperor again. What is the latest word from the refugee convoy?

SENATOR KOLOMO
We...they have deleted the coordinates from their navicomputers, but that won’t be enough. The Empire only needs to interrogate one of the ship captains....

Kolomo pauses.

SENATOR KOLOMO (CONT'D)
And Vader is there.

Senator Kolomo is shaken after saying the name. He tries to hide it from Senator Antilles, who is unfazed.

SENATOR ANTILLES
Yes. Although seemingly he is not in command. I wondered when he would turn up. This whole affair reeks of him, but when he was not reported at Townowi....
(considering)
I'm afraid we've fallen into his trap.

SENATOR KOLOMO
I don't understand. The charges against my world, they are baseless. The idea that Townowi's Minister of the Interior was involved in the bombing of that Shuttle, it was preposterous.

SENATOR ANTILLES
That's not what I mean. Vader's presence at Bestine, it was not fortuitous. He knew we would offer sanctuary to your forces when Townowi was attacked. The flight of the refugees was the entire purpose of the Townowi operation. To identify the rebels and, through them, to locate the Alliance Base.

SENATOR KOLOMO
But surely, the devastation of an entire planet, simply to flush out the handful of rebels--

SENATOR ANTILLES
It is the Emperor's preferred method. He knows that if the Rebellion is allowed to survive, it will gather strength apace, and he is desperate to find its heart and destroy it. But this desperation has given us an opportunity, if only we had time to use it.

Senator Antilles begins to lose his composure, but he decides he is too old for that. He thinks the whole situation out.

SENATOR ANTILLES (CONT'D)
Vader was too impatient to move against Townowi. He fabricated evidence against you concerning the Imperial Academy Shuttle bombing so the Empire could have full leave to assault your planet with impunity.

SENATOR KOLOMO
I don't see how that helps us. I've already tried to present this to the Senate.

SENATOR ANTILLES
Ah, but you had no proof that Townowi rebels were not involved, and the Empire did. False allegations, to be sure, but who will ever know? Within an hour of the Senate resolution against Townowi, the bombardment had begun. I'm sorry, my friend, I would have prevented this catastrophe if I could.

Senator Kolomo looks up, nods silently.

SENATOR ANTILLES (CONT'D)
I wish I could believe that the Force would help us, but I've seen too much....

Antilles regrets having said that aloud when he sees Kolomo's face. He realizes the other Senator is looking to him for guidance.

SENATOR ANTILLES (CONT'D)
All the same, it is our duty to turn this to our advantage, if we may. We still have some time before this runs its course. The Provost of Bestine is a daring man.
(trying to calm Kolomo)
Do you know about Hoo Tho?

SENATOR KOLOMO
(recovering)
What? No.

SENATOR ANTILLES
It's a system on the edge of the galactic Core. A backwater settlement of the Mining Guild. Largely unremarkable. It barely has a presence on the Assembly.

Senator Kolomo does not understand.

SENATOR ANTILLES (CONT'D)
But it would be a highly profitable colony if the Mining Guild were allowed to alter its atmosphere ever so slightly. The approval for this procedure has been tied up in bureaucratic circles since, well, since the instatement of the New Order.

SENATOR KOLOMO
Then Bestine is trying to blackmail the Emperor.

SENATOR ANTILLES
The Provost is not quite that daring, Senator. And it would not work anyway. Hoo Tho is too close to an Internal Security Bureau outpost. The Empire would never risk increasing trade traffic through the system.

SENATOR KOLOMO
So this is a grudge.

SENATOR ANTILLES
Which Bestine and the Mining Guild will abandon shortly, I fear. Soon, the Senate will be reminded of their importance again, and this is all they really want. In the end, they, too, are Imperial puppets. Like the Senate itself. Well, most of us, anyway.

A TRILLING SOUND comes over the Delegation Chamber comlink. The two Senators look up.

SENATOR ANTILLES
(rising)
The council is back in session. I'll accompany you, Senator.

SENATOR KOLOMO
Do we have the support of Alderaan, then?

Antilles is silent until they enter the outer hall. TK-299 follows. Together, they fall in with other Assembly members as they make their way to the main chamber.

SENATOR ANTILLES
As much support as we can offer. Bail Organa will not be there. Presently he is on a diplomatic mission in the Outer Rim, with his daughter.

SENATOR KOLOMO
How is the Princess, Senator?

SENATOR ANTILLES
(studying Kolomo for a span)
She is turning into a strong leader, like her father. She plans to run for election next year.

Senator Kolomo's TWI'LEK ADVISOR finds him in the crowd. The Advisor bows to both of them. He speaks with a thick Huttese accent.

TWI'LEK ADVISOR
Senator Kolomo, things are not good.

SENATOR ANTILLES
They never are.

TWI'LEK ADVISOR
We believe the Emperor has swayed the Mining Guild to his will. Expect the Bestine situation to resolve itself to his favor.

SENATOR ANTILLES
They always do. Good luck, Senator. I will see you in the main chamber.

SENATOR KOLOMO
Don’t get me wrong, Senator. We appreciate the Alliance offering us shelter when the bombardments began, but my homeworld is still very much at stake, sir.

SENATOR ANTILLES
Your homeworld is already lost, I’m afraid. The siege of Townowi was terribly absolute. It’s the future we should be concerned about now.

FADE OUT.

END OF ACT ONE

ACT TWO

FADE IN:

EXT. SPACE - NEAR TOWNOWI

PAN ACROSS into orbit around Townowi, a gray wasteland of a world. A *Carrack*-class Cruiser bearing Imperial markings, the *ARBITER IX*, SLIDES INTO VIEW, followed by the DULL WHINING of a Tie Fighter squadron patrol escorting a wing of TIE Bombers.

TIE FIGHTER PILOT (V.O.)
Townowi space is secure, *Arbiter IX*. We are commencing air strikes on the capital city on your mark.

ARBITER IX OFFICER (V.O.)
Mark. Good hunting and be careful. There are still a few pockets of resistance in the urban districts. Intel has spotted active turbolaser emplacements.

TIE FIGHTER BOMBER (V.O.)
Just show us where to rain, A-Niner.

EXT. TOWNOWI CAPITAL – NIGHT

Imperial Occupation of the capital has not been friendly: the skeletal remains of buildings stretch into the night skyline, burnt and smoldering. A pall of smoke hangs over the city. TIE Fighters and Blastboats break through the haze, hunting for Townowi guerillas. Occasionally, BLASTER FIRE can be heard in the distance.

TRACK DOWN to a captured spaceport that has been turned into a makeshift concentration camp. Throngs of Townowi citizens huddle behind prefab electrified fences.

Stormtrooper-filled repulsor transports escort more citizens along security checkpoints, a long line of survivors, grimy and crestfallen. Obsolete K-5 SECURITY COMBAT DROIDS wander the perimeter. A speeder bike ZOOMS PAST THE SCREEN, followed by four more. Spaced strategically around the spaceport camp are AT-ST Scout Walkers. Their heads, bristling with laser cannons, SCAN THE SCENE.

INT. RAMSHACKLE TOWNOWI BUILDING – NIGHT

Hiding in a derelict building in an urban district of the capital, SEVERAL TOWNOWI REBELS are trying to rest. Some are sleeping on blankets thrown across piles of debris, others are cleaning the barrels of their blaster rifles, and some are using medpacs to heal their wounded.

One Townowi Rebel, FUPA, near the back, carefully puts on an Imperial Stormtrooper Helmet, looks around, and then removes it. He tosses it into a heap of bricks and glass.

GRUFF LEADER, getting a bit fat, and SCOUT, a boy of sixteen, peer out of a broken window.

SCOUT
There she is.

GRUFF LEADER

Bre’s little girl! Turn off the minefield.

FUPA

Yessir.

EXT. TOWNOWI CAPITAL – NIGHT

CHORI BRE, almost twenty, female, looking like she’s been trying to act tough her whole life, crawls silently through the wreckage of the buildings across from the Townowi hideout. She is wearing olive-gray pants, torn at the knees, a TDF flight vest, and a tight-fitting helmet with goggles, all military issue. TWO SMALL THERMAL CHARGES are attached to her ammo belt.

A Modified Trast A-A5 speeder truck has crashed into the face of a building near her. Bre huddles over to the repulsor truck, hides beneath it, and SCANS THE STREET.

A few wrecked speeder bikes, a few white and gleaming bodies of Imperial Scout Troopers, but nothing else. The street goes on and on, rising into the soupy haze of the captured spaceport.

Bre quickly ducks back behind a section of wall as the ROARING ENGINES of TIE Bombers fly by above her.

She pulls out her blaster pistol, as if that would help against the bombers, and then sprints across the street.

INT. RAMSHACKLE TOWNOWI BUILDING – NIGHT

Fupa lets Chori Bre into the derelict building. Its blast door SLAMS down behind her. Bre removes her helmet and her goggles and shakes out her hair, quickly balling it up into a knot above her head as she gives her report.

BRE

We need to move it. A patrol is coming this way from across the river.

Fupa stares into a monitor on his lap.

FUPA
I get no readings on that.

BRE
(sighing)
Did the convoy make it to the Rebel Base?

GRUFF LEADER
No one's gotten through the jamming fields yet. I have no idea. We're cut off from the rest of the galaxy, Bre.

BRE
The spaceport. No way. They've turned that into a guarded camp. That's where most of us are now.

SCOUT
Even if we could get in there, where would we go? We don't know the coordinates to the Rebel Base.

BRE
I do. Dad told me before we got separated. I was supposed to pilot one of the civilian transports in the convoy. Now-- I'm headed to the spaceport to steal a Shuttle.

SCOUT
But you just said there's no way into the spaceport.

BRE
I'm trying for it anyway. I'm telling you, it's not safe to stay here.

Outside a mine EXPLODES. Dust shakes down from the rafters.

FUPA
I've got readings now.

BLASTER BOLTS begin to shake the building. One enters through the window and EXPLODES against the back wall. Fupa drops his monitor and grabs his rifle. The Townowi Rebels

RETURN FIRE through other windows.

SCOUT
I can’t see a thing! There’s too much smoke from the mine!

BRE
(putting on her goggles)
Uh, that’s why they set it off.

GRUFF LEADER
Retreat!

Fupa, Scout, and a few others take up positions around the blast door. Bre has her hand on the door controls. She looks at Fupa. Fupa nods. The door SWISHES open.

A K-5 Combat Droid appears in the doorway and opens fire with its hand cannons. Fupa falls dead before he can get a shot off. The other Townowi Rebels scatter.

Bre, against the wall right next to the door, quickly spins around and CLAMPS a thermal charge on the droid’s arm. She ducks back in, motioning for Scout to move away.

A DULL THUMP as the K-5 fills the open doorway with smoking debris. Bre, leaning against the wall, takes a deep breath, and LEAPS through the door.

EXT. TOWNOWI CAPITAL – NIGHT
Bre runs down the street of the capital as fast as she can before the smoke clears. BLASTER BOLTS WHIZZ by her head.

A stormtrooper comes out of the smoke and levels his blaster rifle. Bre DODGES behind a wrecked speeder bike as the Stormtrooper FIRES. Bre RIPS OFF a plate from the speeder bike and begins to tamper with its wiring. SPARKS fly out, but then the bike rises on a repulsor field.

Bre stands, FIRES TWICE, and jumps on the bike. She ZOOMS OUT OF VIEW, heading for the spaceport.

EXT. TOWNOWI CAPITAL – NEAR CAPTURED SPACEPORT – NIGHT

Bre slows down her speeder bike, hovering on the outskirts of the captured Townowi spaceport. She looks at the situation and frowns.

An abandoned Cargo Skiff EXPLODES near her. TURN WITH BRE'S SPEEDER BIKE to see an Imperial Scout Walker firing on her position. Between the AT-ST's legs, WE CAN SEE a squad of stormtroopers and another K-5 Combat Droid following the Walker. Bre punches it, zooming towards the AT-ST. Her bike cannons open fire. A few stormtroopers are blasted into the ground. The Scout Walker cannot target Bre's speeder bike.

ON BRE, leaning to the side to dodge incoming fire from the squad of stormtroopers. She POPS the second thermal charge off her ammo belt. As she passes under the AT-ST she CLAMPS the charge on one of its legs. The stormtroopers and their droid duck as Bre zooms over them.

TURN WITH BRE's SPEEDER BIKE again, as the thermal charge EXPLODES. The Scout Walker, a leg lost, topples over and ERUPTS INTO FLAME. Everyone near the impact is motionless, and spread out all over the street. Bre slowly presses forward. She halts her speeder bike over the Combat Droid, a hole in its head alive with SPARKING wires. Bre lifts her goggles and smiles.

EXT. TOWNOWI SPACEPORT – NIGHT

The rewired K-5 Security Combat Droid leads Bre through the Imperial forces in the captured spaceport. Bre's hands are on her head as she scans the *Lambda*-class Shuttles spread all around her. She WHISPERS back to the droid.

BRE
(whispering)
What's your name?

COMBAT DROID
Two-Tau!

BRE
(whispering)
Two-Tau, which one of these Shuttles are empty?

Two-Tau motions toward the open ramp of a nearby Shuttle.

TWO-TAU
Ee-kawa choota.

Bre and Two-Tau board the Shuttle without incident.

EXT. TOWNOWI CAPITAL – NIGHT

Bre's stolen Shuttle ROCKETS out into the sky above the Townowi Capital. Two TIE Fighters bank hard to avoid her. They steer around for pursuit.

TIE FIGHTER PILOT (V.O.)
Shuttle, halt your progress!

BRE (V.O.)
Whatever.

INT. BRE'S STOLEN SHUTTLE - NIGHT

Bre is a natural at the controls of the stolen Imperial Shuttle. Nevertheless, a WARNING SENSOR goes off on the control panel. The TIE Fighters have scored a hit on her Shuttle.

BRE
Shields. Lousy.

A WHOOSHING SOUND ROARS BEHIND AND BELOW her. Two-Tau has opened the Shuttle's landing ramp!

EXT. TOWNOWI CAPITAL – NIGHT

Two-Tau holds onto a pylon of the Shuttle's ramp, hanging over the Townowi Capital and FIRING at the pursuing TIE Fighters.

BRE(O.S.)
Are you broken or something, Two-Tau? Close that ramp! Your cannons can't breach their armor!

Two-Tau fires again. The TIE fighter's windshield CRACKS APART. The fighter spins out and crashes into its wingman. Both starfighters EXPLODE.

TWO-TAU
Aww yaa tootah!

BRE (O.S.)
Well, okay. So you were, like, aiming for the glass. Gotcha. Now close that ramp, we're leaving!

EXT. SPACE – ABOVE TOWNOWI

Above Townowi, Bre's Shuttle finds a hole in the blockade and BLASTS INTO HYPERSPACE.

FADE OUT.

END OF ACT TWO

ACT THREE

FADE IN:

EXT. BESTINE – PROVISIONAL REFUGEE HANGAR ARRAY – DAY

A bustle of activity as Townowi soldiers and technicians relay commands given to them by their separate captains.

OFF-SCREEN, Senator Kolomo reaches Commander Destri by holovid.

DESTRI (V.O.)
How long will this stonewall continue?

SENATOR KOLOMO (V.O.)
You're in a better position than I to figure that one out, Commander.

INT. BESTINE- *REFUGEE-ONE* HANGAR BAY – DAY

Commander Destri and Thak are huddled close to a vidscreen speaking to Senator Kolomo. Efdee is nearby, his sensor array exposed.

DESTRI
Well, they haven't disrupted communications on Bestine yet, but we'll have to move to ghostband soon, or some other encryption. If we even make it that far.

SENATOR KOLOMO
Commander Destri, I'm afraid with that *Interdictor* in orbit....

DESTRI
I understand. All of us that know the coordinates perfectly understand.

Commander Destri is determined. Thak looks at her and can't help but steel himself, too.

THAK
Do we know yet how the Empire found us?

SENATOR KOLOMO
That is still under investigation.

EXT. CORUSCANT SKYLINE – SUNSET

The skyline of Coruscant is backlit by a dying sunlight. Lights shimmer along the towers and mesmerizing patterns of air traffic.

INT. CORUSCANT - IMPERIAL SENATE

The main chamber of the Imperial Senate is huge. Countless senators, aides, and other officials sit in the circular ports of the convention sphere. Hovering at the center of the Assembly, on the Emperor's repulsor-powered rostrum, sits GHENT VIRAXO, the Emperor's Proconsul and voice in the Senate, BAILIFF, and an Imperial Advisor.

As Viraxo speaks WE CUT to the faces of Senators Kolomo and Antilles, and delegates from the Mining Guild, including THEYD NAND of Bestine and GAV TREVEL of the Corporate Sector Interests Committee.

TK-299 is seated next to Senator Antilles.

VIRAXO
The Emperor has reviewed all reports concerning the asylum of the Townowi rebels on Bestine--

Senator Kolomo's gravsled congressional box moves to hover near the center of the chamber. The Proconsul shows irritation at the gesture, though he also looks to have expected it.

SENATOR KOLOMO
Forgive the interruption, Proconsul, but I must question the integrity of the reports given to the Emperor. More to the point, I find myself at a loss to explain how quickly he could have reviewed these reports, when there was no Imperial commission sent to--

BAILIFF
The honorable gentleman from Townowi will kindly arrest his comments until the Emperor's decision is announced in full.

Senator Antilles uses his loudspeaker to make an announcement, without bothering to move the Alderaan congressional box from its port.

SENATOR ANTILLES
(sighing)
Viraxo, we already know what the decision is, why delay the Senate in these empty procedures?

VIRAXO
(coldly)
Pardon me, Senator?

SENATOR ANTILLES

The Emperor demands the release of the so-called “Townowi rebels” into Imperial custody immediately, and Bestine has little to say in the matter anymore.

VIRAXO
More or less. An astute assessment.

SENATOR ANTILLES
Just another example of the Imperial bureaucracy circumvented by the military forces of the New Order.

SENATOR NAND
Senator, Proconsul, if I may.

GAV TREVEL
(announcing from his own loudspeaker)
Can’t we just get on with this?

BAILIFF
The Emperor’s Proconsul recognizes the honorable delegate of Bestine, Senator Nand.

Nand’s congressional box floats down alongside Senator Kolomo’s.

SENATOR NAND
I must agree with the representatives of Townowi and Alderaan, sir. You have answered a delicate political problem with a decidedly militant answer.

VIRAXO
Darth Vader is unaffiliated with the Imperial Navy, and shall serve as the Emperor’s impartial emissary in the forthcoming resolution. He is already at the scene.

SENATOR ANTILLES
Vader? Impartial? Are we bringing this to the level of low comedy, Proconsul?

VIRAXO

Does the Senator have a point?

SENATOR ANTILLES
The Emperor’s judgment cannot be questioned. Who better than Lord Vader to cut through this tangled web? I’m sure he will bring this matter to a close with his usual… enthusiasm.

VIRAXO
And is it the burden of this Assembly to cut through the tangled web of your sarcasm, Senator? If you have something to say, say it.

SENATOR ANTILLES
I for one would be the last to stand in the way of the Emperor’s justice. I assume that Vader has been duly authorized to act as the representative of the Senate in this matter?

VIRAXO
(growing impatient)
Yes, of course. He has full authority.

SENATOR ANTILLES
Then in accordance with the ancient traditions of the Senate, I also assume that Vader will return with a full report to this honorable assembly on the resolution of the negotiations, properly signed and witnessed by representatives of all concerned parties?

Viraxo studies Antilles narrowly for a moment, as MURMURS OF ASSENT are heard from the assembled Senators.

VIRAXO
Very well. The Emperor would be pleased to honor the wishes of the Senate in this matter.

SENATOR NAND

Then I request that my own officials be allowed a presence at the Townowi proceedings.

SENATOR KOLOMO
I agree with the gentleman from Bestine. It is, after all, his planet where these negotiations will take place.

VIRAXO
I'm sure I can make such arrangements.

SENATOR ANTILLES
I would get that in writing, Senator Nand.

VIRAXO
Senator Antilles, your displeasure at the New Order is clear. In future matters, should we continue to expect similar opposition?

SENATOR ANTILLES
(beat)
One world after another.

Viraxo restrains a cold smile. Antilles leans towards his protocol droid.

SENATOR ANTILLES
(whispering)
Get me Endigo. We're done here.

EXT. SPACE – ABOVE BESTINE

ON THE IMPERIAL BLOCKADE above Bestine. TIE Fighters SCREAM PAST THE SCREEN. The *Atonement* LOOMS INTO VIEW.

INT. STAR DESTROYER *ATONEMENT* – BRIDGE

Admiral Mede stands in front of the hologram display. Captain Veeja is behind him.

VEEJA
Your calm demeanor is your strongest trait, sir.

MEDE
Shut up, Veeja.

Vader materializes on deck.

MEDE (CONT'D)
Lord Vader, I congratulate you on your victory.

VADER
Send your troopers to the surface, Admiral.

MEDE
Of course, milord. Take as many as your particular brand of diplomacy requires.

VEEJA
(whispering)
Sir..!

VADER
Have your fighters refuel at the *Reprisal* and then send them down to Bestine, as well.

MEDE
The *Atonement* will be at skeleton crew operating levels in moments, Lord Vader. Contact me when the interrogations begin.

VADER
The repair of your vessel is your main priority, Admiral. It would be a shame if the *Atonement* could not join us in the destruction of the Rebel Base.

MEDE
Indeed.

Vader flickers out. Mede's false smile disappears. He glances at his Technician.

TECHNICIAN
The Office of Logistics and Supply have not returned contact. It seems that the replenishment fleet is too far out of range.

MEDE
Of course it is. Captain?

VEEJA
Yes, sir?

MEDE
Send a wideband broadcast to all outlying systems. Get whatever Union repair crews you can here on the double.

EXT. BESTINE – PROVISIONAL REFUGEE HANGAR ARRAY – DAY

Imperial forces have cordoned off the concave hangar array with energy pylons and stormtrooper patrols. On the hangar side of the barely visible force field, Bestine security officers have set up their own camp. Each side eyes each other warily, blaster carbines at the ready. TIE Fighter wings fly in regulation patrols over the scene.

INT. BESTINE - *REFUGEE-ONE* HANGAR BAY- COMM CENTER

Commander Destri is again speaking to Senator Kolomo on the Comm Center's vidscreen. Efdee still has his sensors array out and scanning.

SENATOR KOLOMO
I'm sorry, Commander. The Provost has lost any real ability to protect you.

DESTRI
Don't count us out yet, Senator. I will get the convoy safely to the Rebel Base.

SENATOR KOLOMO
(not listening)
And, frankly, I am out of suggestions.

DESTRI
We can win this, Senator. Somehow.

The Senator is silent for a while. Commander Destri frowns and bangs her hand silently on the table.

SENATOR KOLOMO
You sound like Bail Antilles here. He has something up his sleeve.

DESTRI
Alderaan's in this mess? Well, that's reason enough for optimism.

SENATOR KOLOMO
Perhaps. Stall the Empire as long as you can.

Efdee sounds off. Thak turns and listens.

THAK
An Imperial Shuttle is landing.

DESTRI
We'll keep in touch, Senator.

She turns the vidscreen off.

DESTRI (CONT'D)
Let's go. That will be Vader.

THAK
Are you strong enough to resist him?

DESTRI
That's why you're coming with me. After you get a blaster.

THAK
But am I strong enough?

Commander Destri and Thak step down into the hangar. Efdee retracts its sensor array and follows.

DESTRI
I'll have a blaster, too.

THAK
Blasters against Darth Vader, Commander?

DESTRI
They're not for him, Thak, and you know that. One of us gets the shakes, back of the head and no regrets.

THAK
Yes, ma'am.

Commander Destri and Thak meet a cadre of Bestine security officers and exit. Efdee remains behind, MOANING.

FADE OUT.

END OF ACT THREE

ACT FOUR

FADE IN:

EXT. SPACE - UNKNOWN SECTOR

A massive space-tug, *The Long Haul*, moves through an uncharted sector of space.

TK-299 (V.O.)
Mr. Endigo, we're in trouble.

INT. *THE LONG HAUL* – MAIN HOLD

Senator Antilles' droid assistant speaks over a shaky subspace vidscreen to the crew of the space-tug in the Main Hold. The crew is obviously a band of vagabonds and pirates. SHEN ENDIGO, a dangerous-looking man with cyborged parts displayed proudly, stands front and center. His mates are gathered around him, smiling, dimly alert.

ENDIGO
I've heard. An *Interdictor.* Two Star Destroyers, one severely disabled. We're trying to find out who deals with freelance contracts in or around the Bestine system. The Empire's put out an open channel invitation to any and all work crews that can make it in.

TK-299 (V.O.)
Time is short, Mr. Endigo. General Madine has not yet called for an evacuation of the Rebel Base.

ENDIGO
Why not?

TK-299 (V.O.)
The Alliance is not ready for a mass exodus. There aren't enough safeworlds to house them all.

ENDIGO
Tell Antilles not to worry, Tee-Kay. My people can handle the *Interdictor*. Gravity well projectors are easy enough to trick. Mass shadow data is a simple matter of wiring.

Endigo cocks his head, holding a metal hand up to the transceiver that serves as his left ear.

ENDIGO (CONT'D)
Contract's already signed. We'll be in hyperspace in ten. Bestine my morning, Core-side.

TK-299 (V.O.)
Good work, Mr. Endigo. We have your floating account already open. Shall it be dataries or hyperbarides?

EXT. BESTINE - PROVISIONAL REFUGEE HANGAR ARRAY - DAY

Darth Vader's *Lambda*-class Shuttle settles to the hangar floor, folding its wings up to land. As soon as the boarding ramp hits the ground, a file of stormtroopers rush out and take up two protective lines on either side of the ramp.

Provost Sevas and his bodyguards stand facing the Shuttle. The bodyguards sling their blaster rifles out and over their backs. Vader slowly descends the ramp, followed by Captain Bulloc of the *Reprisal* and more stormtroopers.

PROVOST SEVAS
(bowing)
Lord Vader.

VADER
Provost. Is the negotiation hall ready?

PROVOST SEVAS
The prisoners are already there, waiting for you.

VADER
You have my permission to attend the meeting, Provost.

PROVOST SEVAS
I've also taken the liberty of installing a mobile holographic imager in the negotiation hall, as well, milord. Upon Admiral Mede's request.

Vader stares at the Provost, BREATHING mechanically.

VADER
(beat)
The Empire welcomes your initiative, Provost.

INT. BESTINE NEGOTIATION HALL – DAY

Vader, Captain Bulloc, and the flickering image of Admiral Mede are seated on one side of a metal and glass boardroom table. Behind them are two stormtroopers.

On the other side of the table are Commander Destri and her aide, Thak. Behind them are two Bestine security officers and Provost Sevas.

BULLOC
Seventy-two hours ago the world of Townowi fired upon Imperial forces acting under the authority of Senate resolution 457-851--

Mede looks over to Bulloc for a second, as if something the Captain just said were troubling him. His holographic image distorts before WE CAN REGISTER the emotion.

DESTRI
An Imperial fleet was bombarding the planet! We were only defending ourselves.

BULLOC
That’s not accurate, Commander. The Imperial Navy was merely establishing a blockade of the planet in accordance with the Senate resolution. The destruction of all spaceports was explicitly authorized by--

DESTRI
Couch it however you want, Captain. The convoy under my command was pulled out of hyperspace for no good reason and cruelly ambushed.

BULLOC
Why do you think you were pulled out of hyperspace?

DESTRI
You tell me. We were refugees fleeing Townowi as the Empire bombarded it from orbit.

BULLOC
You were fleeing to the hidden Rebel Base, weren’t you?

DESTRI

No. We had no set destination.

MEDE
It is a well-known fact that the government of Townowi has been a supporter of the Alliance for some time.

DESTRI
So you say. The Townowi government was against certain edicts of the New Order. I won't dispute that. The new taxation mandates, for example.

MEDE
This is all beside the point. It was the Academy Shuttle massacre that started all of this. How do you account for that? Townowi rebels destroyed a Shuttle bound for the Imperial Naval Academy, a Shuttle filled with Townowi recruits, I might add. Your own countrymen!
(beat)
It was all laid out to the Senate prior to the vote.

DESTRI
I don't have to account for that, Admiral Mede. There are no "Townowi rebels"! I am Commander Tet Destri of the Townowi Defense Force, and I was protecting innocent people fleeing our world's destruction! No one knows what really happened to that Shuttle!
(beat)
Except for the Empire, maybe.

BULLOC
There's more than to it than that, Commander Destri, and you know it.
(reads off a list from his datapad)
Smuggling supplies to Rebel hotspots, gathering illegal information of Imperial activities in your Sector, hidden training centers preparing an underground resistance. These have all

been documented. We have a datapad here full of proof, if you would like to review it.

DESTRI
Go to hell.

VADER
Manners, Miss Destri.

DESTRI
And you go with him. Your proofs are fabrications. You had nothing tying Townowi to the Rebellion except your own paranoid delusions.

Beat.

VADER
(slowly)
You are a member of the Rebel Alliance and a traitor.

DESTRI
I am a member of the Rebel Alliance and a traitor.

As she finishes, Destri bites her lower lip. She glances over to Thak, who looks very afraid.

UNDER THE TABLE, Thak unclicks his blaster out of his holster.

BULLOC
Thank you, Commander. We can continue. Where is the Rebel Base?

DESTRI
I don’t know what you’re talking about.

VADER
You are lying.

DESTRI
(struggling)
I am lying.

MEDE
Where is the Rebel Base then, Commander Destri?

A lull follows. Vader’s BREATH MASK modulates the silence.

Commander Destri breaks into a feverish sweat. Her pulse quickens. Her hand, on the table, begins to shake. Thak notices, and tears begin to well in his eyes. He slides his blaster out quietly.

VADER
You will tell us where the Rebellion is hiding.

DESTRI
I will tell you—

Destri is frozen stiff. She can barely manage to move her eyes over to Thak.

DESTRI (CONT’D)
--where the Rebellion is hiding.

THAK
NO!

Thak rises and points his blaster to Destri’s head. He is sobbing horribly. His gun hand trembles. Panic ensues.

STORMTROOPER ONE blasts Thak. The aide falls dead, toppling over his chair. The Provost’s officers raise their laser rifles. Destri, free of Vader’s mindprobe, SCREAMS and blasts Stormtrooper One. He CLATTERS backwards, trailing smoke.

MEDE
Vader, no!

PROVOST SEVAS
Stop this!

STORMTROOPER TWO blasts Commander Destri, catching her in the shoulder. She hits the ground hard.

BESTINE SECURITY OFFICER ONE
(to Stormtrooper Two)

Drop your weapon!

PROVOST SEVAS
The negotiations are over! Officer, take the Commander away.
(to Vader and Bulloc)
Get out!

BESTINE SECURITY OFFICER TWO pulls Destri's wounded body out of the hall. More security officers rush in, rifles out.

VADER
This is unwise of you, Provost Sevas.

PROVOST
I said get out, Lord Vader. Your investigation here is over.

VADER
(rising)
Hardly.

The Provost's hand goes to his throat. Security Officer One lowers his guard and goes to his superior's aid.

MEDE
Lord Vader, cease this! Let him go! Our conflict is with the Townowi, not the Mining Guild. Return to your temporary encampment at once.

The Provost falls to his knees, struggling for breath. Every Bestine soldier has his laser rifle aimed at the Dark Lord. Beat.

VADER
Quite right, Admiral.

The Provost takes a LOUD GASP of air. Vader, Bulloc, and Stormtrooper Two exit. Mede shakes his head and flickers out. The Provost is pulled to his feet. Color has drained from his face.

PROVOST SEVAS
(barely managing a whisper)

Make sure… make sure to alert Med Lab. Get a bacta tank ready for Commander Destri.
(taking a final look at the scene)
And have these bodies removed.

BESTINE SECURITY OFFICER ONE
Yessir. I'll get Senator Nand on the line, as well.

PROVOST SEVAS
Before that, officer… before that: activate the planet's deflector shields and send the citizenry to the shelters.

EXT. CORUSCANT - IMPERIAL SENATE – NIGHT

Night has fallen on Coruscant. The dome of the Imperial Senate is lit by broad bands of massive spotlights.

INT. IMPERIAL SENATE - DELEGATION CHAMBER – NIGHT

Bail Antilles is waiting in the Alderaan Delegation Chamber with TK-299, Senator Nand of Bestine, and Gav Trevel. He is watching the sky traffic of Coruscant, hands behind his back. The door to the Delegation Chamber SWISHES open. Senator Kolomo and his Twi'lek Advisor enter.

Senator Kolomo is obviously surprised to see the other people present. TK-299 goes over and shuts the door. A SERIES OF SMALL BEEPS signal that the door is locked and secure.

SENATOR ANTILLES
(turning around)
Don't worry, Kolomo.

SENATOR KOLOMO
Don't worry?! I've heard that shots were fired on--

He stops short when Antilles raises a hand. Antilles then motions to Gav Trevel.

SENATOR ANTILLES

This is Gav Trevel, of the Corporate Sector Interests Committee. He has a freighter waiting to take you and Senator Nand away from Coruscant.

SENATOR KOLOMO
What? Why?

SENATOR ANTILLES
You'll be quite safe with him, Senator. You are not safe here anymore. The Emperor intends to charge you with high treason. And with things as they are in the Senate, I don't see how it can be prevented. Senator Nand is going with you, just in case. ISB Agents are out in full force tonight.

GAV TREVEL
(into his comlink)
Fire her up.
(to the others)
We should be going.

SENATOR ANTILLES
Take the north passage. It should be secure for the next fifteen minutes.

SENATOR KOLOMO
What makes you think I'll be safe in the Corporate Sector?

GAV TREVEL
We pay our taxes, Senator.

SENATOR ANTILLES
Corporate Sector Authority is nearly autonomous. If you make it, the Empire will not follow. From there you can find a transport to the Rebel Base.

SENATOR NAND
I wish to return to Bestine.

SENATOR ANTILLES
Do what you will, but do it quickly.

SENATOR KOLOMO
Are you sure about this?

SENATOR ANTILLES
Of course not, but it's your best hope. I'm working on getting the rest of the Townowi convoy off Bestine. If all goes as planned, they will rendezvous with you at the Rebel Base.

SENATOR KOLOMO
Aren't you worried what will happen to you?

SENATOR ANTILLES
Go. I had wished that Townowi could join the Alliance under better circumstances, but you cannot pull out now. A civil war is coming, Senator.

All begin to exit except for Senator Antilles and his protocol droid.

GAV TREVEL
(into his comlink)
Expect cargo in five.

EXT. HYPERSPACE – ON *THE LONG HAUL*

in the BLUE-WHITE CORRIDOR of hyperspace.

INT. *THE LONG HAUL* – MAIN HOLD

A crowd has gathered in the Main Hold of the space-tug, *The Long Haul*. A motley crew of forty-odd pirates, techies, mercenaries, and aliens are all gathered around a holoprojector.

SKATUHL, a reptilian Barabel, female, and HULDA CAULP, a crusty near-human engineer are among them.

Shen Endigo is seated on a high mechanical chair overlooking a hologram of Bestine.

ENDIGO
All right, people. Short version. A convoy of Townowi vessels were bound for the Rebel Base. Somehow they got caught, pulled out of hyperspace near the orbit of Bestine. The Provost of Bestine granted the survivors of the Imperial ambush asylum, but who knows how long that will last. Thing keeping the Townowi in the system: an *Interdictor*--class cruiser. Same thing that yanked them out of hyperspace in the first place.

A holodisplay of an *Interdictor* appears over the planet.

A vector line crawls out from it and upwards, pointing to a 2D-plane of scrolling readout text.

ENDIGO (CONT'D)
An *Interdictor* uses gravity-well projectors to produce a mass shadow into a hyperlane. Suddenly, your navicomputer will hiccup, thinking an asteroid or something is in the way, and cut your engines down to sublight. Our job is to take those gravity-well projectors out. There are four: here, here, here, and here.

With each "here" the bulbous protrusions along the holo-*Interdictor* flash red. More vector graphics, more text.

ENDIGO (CONT'D)
Unfortunately, the cruiser is protected by a pair of *Imperial*-class Star Destroyers. Fortunately, one of those Star Destroyers took a major hit during the raid and is just sitting there.

The Star Destroyers *Atonement* and *Reprisal* appear, dwarfing the *Interdictor*. The *Atonement's* hull glows yellow or red, indicating hull breaches and engine failures.

Endigo reaches behind his chair and pulls out an oversized weapon, too heavy for a normal man, but his cybernetic arm

holds it steady. Either end of the weapon is capped with bulky, jury-rigged contraptions.

ENDIGO (CONT'D)
They think we're coming in as a repair crew. After they check over our records and let us in, we get to work in zero-G. They shouldn't notice, among all the hydrospanners, polarity irons, and hull kits we'll be carrying, that we'll also have this: a one-man, long-range cannon.
(shakes the weapon for effect)
With the cannon, we'll fire something known in gentler circles as "replicating transflux capacitors," but don't let the name intimidate you. The capacitors will lodge into the gravity-well projectors and make their way into the main computer.

The red-lit gravity-well projectors wink out one by one on the holo-*Interdictor*.

ENDIGO (CONT'D)
Two hours pass, a mass shadow thinks it's there but it's not. Since, during all this time, we haven't fixed a <u>thing</u> on the one Star Destroyer, it shouldn't pose a threat as the *Long Haul* opens fire on the second one.

A representation of *The Long Haul* materializes between the two Star Destroyers.
Simulated ion blasts run from it to the command deck of the *Reprisal*. The holotext of the *Reprisal* turns bright blue and freezes.

ENDIGO (CONT'D)
We ionize it like crazy, contact the Townowi convoy, and we all launch into the nearest hyperlane. Then we go into hiding in the Anoad system, all very quiet, and all very rich. Any questions? Good. Everyone into positions, we're about to drop out.

`

EXT. SPACE — ABOVE BESTINE

The *Atonement* sits gutted above Bestine.

TECHNICIAN (V.O.)
Admiral, we have just detected an inbound ship on Townowi trajectory. Nothing expected. Dropping out of hyperspace now.

A ship immediately enters realspace, smack dab in the center of the Imperial blockade. It is Chori Bre's stolen Imperial Shuttle. The *Atonement* looms in front of her, surrounded by several Union repair ships: bulk-loaders, cargo freighters, fuel-sphere space trains. And *The Long Haul*. Tiny figures zip around the hull of the *Atonement*, workers in spacesuits, fixing the ISD in zero-G.

Two TIE fighters break away from their patrol and move towards Bre's Shuttle.

TIE FIGHTER PILOT (V.O.)
Shuttle, state your name, cargo, and destination.

INT. STAR DESTROYER *ATONEMENT* – BRIDGE

Admiral Mede and his Captain take notice of Bre's Shuttle through the bridge's viewports. Mede's Technician is scanning it already.

MEDE
Who is that? One of Vader's men?

VEEJA
I don't believe so.

TECHNICIAN
Only one life form, sir.

MEDE
How is our hangar dock?

TECHNICIAN

Fine, sir. I must admit, these Union men are better than--

MEDE
Tractor beam that Shuttle now. Have the fighters escort it here. Does the *Reprisal* see it?

TECHNICIAN
It's already on their scopes, sir.

VEEJA
What do you think it is, Admiral?

Staring at the incoming Imperial Shuttle, Mede becomes lost in thought.

MEDE
(absently)
We'll find out soon enough.

VEEJA
Something on your mind, sir?

MEDE
Yes, there is. Withdraw with me to my quarters, Captain. I want to speak to you about something.
(to Technician)
Inform me when that Shuttle is secure.

The Technician nods as Mede and Veeja exit.

INT. BRE'S STOLEN SHUTTLE

The Shuttle begins to wobble as it is caught in the *Atonement*'s tractor beam. Two-Tau looks over at Chori Bre, whose eyes are wide with fear.

BRE
How did we get here? What's going on?

TWO-TAU
Ee-choota *INDA CHUR*.

BRE
That other ship? How? Never mind. They've caught us. Uh. Wait! You go. Back there. Go and, uh.

TWO-TAU
Dunchoo.

BRE
Yeah, so they know one life form. You'll be my special guest or something.

TWO TAU
Non chupa?

BRE
I mean, whatever! You just get back there and hide.

TIE FIGHTER PILOT (V.O.)
Name, cargo, and destination.

Bre's stolen Shuttle gets nearer and nearer to open hangar.

ON ENDIGO, vac-suited, holding a piece of metal alloy. He watches the Shuttle as it begins to dock.

ENDIGO's POV: We ZOOM several times to the windshield of the Imperial Shuttle. With Endigo, WE SEE Bre struggling with the main console controls.

BACK TO Endigo. Skatuhl, floating some distance away, taps the bracer on her spacesuit.

SKATUHL
(garbled)
Slaaka slaaka.

ENDIGO
(garbled)
Yeah. Right. Get the cannon already. I've got a bad feeling about this.

FADE OUT.

END OF ACT FOUR

ACT FIVE

FADE IN:

INT. STAR DESTROYER *ATONEMENT* – ADMIRAL'S QUARTERS

Mede's quarters aboard the *Atonement* are an attempt to challenge the vessel's otherwise gray and dismal industrial functionality: red drapes hang from decorative gold lamps, both from his homeworld of Chandrila.

A line of synthe-teak shelves run along a wall, holding various baubles from the Old Republic Navy, trophies, mobile planetary system representations, medals of all kinds, the head of a droid long-forgotten, and a model of the Admiral's first ship, a *Victory*--class Star Destroyer.

Mede and Veeja enter.

Mede takes a seat at an oval table. A command console is spread before him. Veeja stands, hesitates, and then sits across from him.

MEDE
When did our detachment arrive in the Bestine system? Six days ago? Seven?

VEEJA
Yessir. Seven, I mean.

MEDE
A week.

VEEJA
Yessir. A week.

MEDE
And we were given no real reason to be here. Just standard tactical radio-silence maneuvers. Go to Bestine and wait, with that *Interdictor*.

Fortunately, we happened to be in the right place to intercept the fleeing Rebels when the Townowi crisis blew up.

VEEJA
Titus, forgive me. I am not following you at all.

Mede suddenly looks up, frowning. He logs into the local Imperial intelligence channel on his command console.

ON MEDE'S MONITOR as a series of encoded command readouts come up.

MEDE
(after reading a bit)
I'm sorry, Veeja. I'm not trying to be cryptic. A week ago, sixteen other*Interdictor* detachments were sent to sixteen different sectors of the galaxy, including us. And they were given similar standing orders. Sit there and wait.

VEEJA
(catching on)
All those systems wouldn't happen to be on hyperlane trajectories out of Townowi, would they?

Mede nods.

VEEJA (CONT'D)
But how could Naval Command have known about the Townowi incident? I mean, before it happened? You don't seriously think..?

ON MEDE'S MONITOR as footage of the Imperial Academy Shuttle appears. WE SEE Townowi before the bombardment. On a pristine spaceport, a CHEERING crowd waves at a string of new Academy recruits loading up the ramp of an Imperial *Lambda*-class Shuttle. The Empire's insignia is prominent on its main wing, the color of it strangely at high contrast in the poor image feed. The footage SPEEDS UP for a second. The Shuttle has lifted off the spaceport on its

repulsor fields. Its wings fold down and it tilts upward. Its sublight engines glow slightly. Without warning, the Shuttle EXPLODES.

Mede pauses the image on the explosion, the flaming wreckage hanging in the air above the Townowi spaceport. The Admiral looks up.

MEDE
What other explanation is there? Maybe we blew up that Shuttle.
(nodding to himself)
We blew it up, blamed it on the rebels, and used it as an excuse to attack Townowi.

VEEJA
You mean Vader did.

MEDE
(shaking his head)
I'm sure he was involved, but you know it goes much deeper than that. How many officers must have been involved, from Vader on down? This whole New Order, the Empire instead of the Republic—
(beat)
I've always been a military man, I've always thought I could serve my conscience as well as the Emperor. But this?

VEEJA
What do you mean to do?

MEDE
(not answering)
I've looked away so many times. It's a terribly easy thing to cultivate: apathy. Told myself at least I wasn't responsible for the atrocities.
(looks to Veeja)
How long have we served together? Almost eleven years. You know I started my career in the Old Republic. Very few of us are left. I'm sure some of my former colleagues consider me a traitor

now.

VEEJA
I've always been proud to serve under you, Admiral.

MEDE
And you were one of the good ones. The Academy still knows how to turn a young man into a proper officer.

Beat.

VEEJA
(cautiously)
What do you mean to do, Titus?

MEDE
I know of a Senator. Friend of my father's, before the war. The name may still be worth something to him.

EXT. SPACE – ABOVE BESTINE – BENEATH THE STAR DESTROYER *ATONEMENT*

Endigo, Skatuhl, and Hulda Caulp are floating beneath the *Atonement*, hidden between the long columns of the Star Destroyer's subsidiary reactors. The Barabel is holding the long-range cannon. Endigo is scanning towards the *Interdictor*. Hulda is holding a soldering torch ready for no reason.

CANNON POV: The *Interdictor* is lined up in the cannon's crosshairs. Skatuhl shifts it down and to the side, targeting one of the vessel's gravity-well projectors.

Endigo gives a GARBLED COMMAND.

ENDIGO (O.S.)
Clear.

PULL BACK to see the cannon BACKFIRE. The end of its barrel FIZZLES and POPS, smoke dissipating in the vacuum of space. Skatuhl is propelled back from the misfire.

Endigo catches her leg and pulls her close.

ENDIGO
(garbled)
You all right?

SKATUHL
(garbled)
Feetchu.
(motions with the ruined cannon)
Slaaka slaaku junk.

HULDA CAULP
"Transflux capacitors" my eye. Who thought that one up?

Endigo lets out a DISTORTED SIGH.

ENDIGO
(garbled)
That's the last time we deal in prototypes from the Black Sun Syndicate.

SKATUHL
(garbled)
Vigo Sprax.

Endigo points directly at the Barabel's faceplate.

ENDIGO
(garbled)
Never trust a Squib.

Skatuhl SMACKS his hand away and GROWLS.

HULDA CAULP
(garbled)
Fine. Well, what now, Shen?

ENDIGO
(garbled)
Lessee. We, uh, get out of here for one thing. Then I guess we'll make our way into the *Atonement* itself.

HULDA CAULP
(garbled)

What for?

ENDIGO
(garbled)
We'll improvise. Maybe we can hotwire her weapon systems and fire them at the *Interdictor*, huh?

SKATUHL
(garbled)
No point at me again.

ENDIGO
(garbled)
Aw, come on. Let's go already! We'll figure something out. Hulda, get everyone from our tug onto the Star Destroyer. Let them know what's up.
(pointing to the cannon)
And get rid of that.

The three mercenaries hit their belt thrusters and exit.

INT. BRE'S STOLEN SHUTTLE

Chori Bre, scared out of her wits, stares out of the Shuttle into the Star Destroyer's hangar bay. Union repair men are scrambling around, hauling power cables and portable energy generators. After a POWER DROID tramps by, Bre sees SEVERAL IMPERIAL OFFICERS striding towards her ship.

BRE
Erm. Well. What do you think?

Hiding back in the cargo hold, Two-Tau tries to WHISPER his response.

TWO-TAU (O.S.)
Komayhee woka wonchoo!

BRE
Shh! Yeah, okay, you're right. I guess I just, you know, <u>surrender</u>.

INT. STAR DESTROYER *ATONEMENT* – ADMIRAL'S QUARTERS

In Mede's quarters, an ALERT sounds on the Admiral's desk. A SECURITY OFFICER's voice comes over the communication system. On the other side of the desk, Captain Veeja listens intently.

SECURITY OFFICER (V.O.)
Admiral, the Shuttle has docked. We've taken one human female into custody. She is wearing a TDF uniform.

MEDE
Have her taken to detention. No one is to talk to her without my permission, do you understand?

SECURITY OFFICER (V.O.)
To detention, no one sees her without your say-so, aye-aye sir.

MEDE
(to Veeja)
Now, Captain, we have work to do. Vader will be on his way as soon as he learns of the prisoner.

EXT. SPACE – ABOVE BESTINE - ON VADER'S SHUTTLE

as it navigates through the clogged spacelanes above Bestine. It approaches the *Atonement*.

INT. STAR DESTROYER *ATONEMENT* – DETENTION LEVEL – CELL

Chori Bre is inside a detention cell, seated and shaking, curled up on a hard black matte metal bench. The cell door SWISHES open and Admiral Mede steps through.

MEDE
Chori Bre, of the Townowi Defense Force.

BRE
Sure.

MEDE
I am Admiral Mede of the Imperial Navy.

BRE
Wow.

MEDE
Chori, if I may--

BRE
I prefer ‘Bre.’

MEDE
Bre, I know you are a Rebel and I must ask you--

BRE
Where are the others?

MEDE
The other Townowi?

Bre stares at him.

MEDE (CONT’D)
Of course. The other Townowi are on Bestine, the planet below us. We were sent to capture them.

BRE
Then why are they on the planet?

MEDE
Some escaped our interception. I really don’t have time to explain.

BRE
(desperate)
They escaped?! What about the *Peltast*?

MEDE
The what?

BRE
A Townowi Strike Cruiser. My father was captain.

MEDE
(beat)
I believe your father's Strike Cruiser did not--
(stopping to let Bre weep)
He died bravely. He set his ship to self-destruct. That's why my destroyer is in its current shape.

Bre springs up and SLAPS Mede. He stands there, waiting for another. Bre, crying again, backs away, looking around at the walls of her cell.

MEDE (CONT'D)
Please listen to me, Bre. I want no more conflict with your people. Just listen.

BRE
Then let me out of here! Let me go to-- to the planet down there.

MEDE
Bestine? That would do you no good. Answer me a simple question: did Townowi rebels sabotage the Academy Shuttle?

BRE
What..? No! You did!

MEDE
Do you have proof of this? How can you assure me that Townowi rebels did not plant that bomb?

BRE
Because Townowi rebels were <u>aboard</u> that Shuttle! My brother was aboard that Shuttle! Why would we..? Why?!

MEDE
I knew that. I'm sorry. I knew that. I don't know why I had to hear it.

Mede's comlink SOUNDS.

VEEJA
(V.O.)
Admiral, Vader is about to land.

Bre becomes terrified.

MEDE
(to Bre)
Not to worry.
(into his comlink)
Captain, you know what to do. Make it count.

Mede closes his eyes for a few long seconds. Then he nods silently to himself and opens them again. He stares briefly at Bre. Then the Admiral opens the cell door again and exits. Bre launches after him, but the door SWISHES down too quickly. She BANGS ON THE DOOR futilely, sobbing all the while.

INT. STAR DESTROYER *ATONEMENT* – ADMIRAL'S QUARTERS

Mede is back in his quarters. He goes to his desk. Sits. Looks out a window and stares at the stars. His hand wavers over his command console. Then he presses a button.

TECHNICIAN (V.O.)
Yessir?

MEDE
Get me a secure channel. I want to contact Coruscant. I want to contact Bail Antilles of Alderaan.

FADE OUT.

END OF ACT FIVE

ACT SIX

FADE IN:

INT. STAR DESTROYER *ATONEMENT* – HANGAR BAY

Darth Vader strides off the Shuttle and into the hangar bay, followed by a squad of stormtroopers. They are greeted by a NERVOUS OFFICER and two soldiers. The Nervous Officer salutes, while hurrying to keep up with Vader, who ignores him. The stormtrooper squad remains behind.

VADER
(not slowing down)
Has the prisoner been taken to detention?

NERVOUS OFFICER
Lord Vader, the Admiral left specific instructions that you were to see him on the bridge when you landed. He—

VADER
(interrupting)
There is no need for me to see Admiral Mede. I can find my own way to the detention level.

PAN ACROSS the hangar to Endigo, Skatuhl, Hulda Caulp, and other *Long Haul* crewmates in the background. Endigo watches the Sith Lord recede. A slow smile spreads across his face.

ENDIGO
I told you I'd know what to do when we got here.

HULDA CAULP
(looking at Vader and back again)
Are you crazy, Shen? Surely you're not thinking of--

ENDIGO
Very sure. I'm going to kill him this time.

SKATUHL
Sluk sluk. Dumb.

Endigo turns to his friends and lifts his cyborg arm. He pulls on his shirt and shows how much of his chest, neck, and belly are metal as well. His grin will not disappear.

ENDIGO
I almost had him once.
(holding his metal fingers in a pinch position)
I got this close.

INT. STAR DESTROYER *ATONEMENT* - DETENTION LEVEL

Vader is walking swiftly down a detention level corridor, followed by the Nervous Officer. As he passes an intersecting corridor, Captain Veeja turns the corner behind him.

VEEJA
Lord Vader! If you had notified me of your arrival, I would have arranged a proper welcoming party, short-handed as we are. The Admiral sends his apologies for not meeting you himself.

Vader pauses. The Nervous Officer tries to catch his breath.

VADER
Thank you, Captain. But I think we can dispense with protocol. The prisoner--

VEEJA
(smoothly interrupting)
Is right this way.

The Captain points down the corridor he just came from.

VEEJA (CONT'D)
She is undoubtedly a Rebel. We've confirmed that the Shuttle was stolen from a Townowi spaceport. And she was on the same trajectory as the Rebel convoy.

They begin to walk together down the way Veeja indicated.

VADER

Good.

VEEJA
In here, milord.

He indicates an open cell door, flanked by TWO DETENTION GUARDS, who salute as they approach.

INT. STAR DESTROYER *ATONEMENT* - DETENTION LEVEL - INSIDE CELL

Vader steps through the blast door and into the cell. He looks around. The cell is empty. Veeja remains in the doorway.

VADER
Where is the prisoner?

Veeja steps back and reaches to the side. The door SLAMS SHUT. In the descending darkness, WE HEAR VADER'S MECHANICAL BREATHING.

INT. STAR DESTROYER *ATONEMENT* - DETENTION LEVEL - OUTSIDE CELL

Veeja steps back from the blast door, looking astonished at what he has done. The two guards look at him with equal parts fear and admiration.

VEEJA
Ray shielding! Full containment! Now!

One of the guards sprints away. Veeja watches the door begin to GLOW RED at its center. The red spot begins to melt into slag. Captain Veeja rushes to the adjacent cell and opens it.

Bre stands there, shaking. He motions for her to follow him. She tentatively steps out into the corridor. Veeja, close to panic, grabs her and activates a nearby comm port.

VEEJA (CONT'D)
Admiral, whatever you're going to do, you'd better do it now. This isn't going to hold him for long.

Veeja, Bre, and the remaining guard flee down the corridor.

INT. STAR DESTROYER *ATONEMENT* - DETENTION LEVEL - INSIDE VADER'S CELL

Vader is cutting his way out of the cell, his lightsaber THRUMMING AND CRACKING as it slowly slices through the shields on the cell's blast door. A SHRILL NOISE comes over the cell's loudspeaker.

MEDE (V.O.)
Lord Vader, can you spare a moment?

VADER
I will kill you for this, Admiral.

MEDE (V.O.)
Like you killed our own Imperial Academy recruits onboard the Townowi Shuttle?

VADER
Your death will not be as quick, I'm afraid.

MEDE (V.O)
Why did we do it, Vader?

Vader doesn't answer. An opening in the door is almost wide enough for him to step through.

MEDE (V.O. – CONT'D)
I really don't understand at all. Those Townowi boys were joining the Empire, they were--

VADER
(interrupting)
They were rebel <u>spies</u>!

MEDE (V.O.)
Is that good enough for you, Senator?

Vader stops. He SWITCHES OFF his lightsaber. He looks up to the loudspeaker.

SENATOR ANTILLES (V.O.)
It is pitch perfect, Admiral. Thank you, Lord Vader.

INT. CORUSCANT - IMPERIAL SENATE – NIGHT

The Senate Chamber is in an UPROAR. Senators are hurrying inside, TALKING AMONGST THEMSELVES in groups and looking at Senator Antilles, who has already taken his place, hovering at the center of the chamber. He stands silently on his congressional box, looking every inch the regal leader of the Senate.

Proconsul Viraxo enters the chamber and hurries to the rostrum platform, frowning at a datapad and listening to the WHISPERS of the Imperial Advisor as he walks. The rostrum gravsled HUMS as it slides gently into its central position. The waiting Bailiff POUNDS his gavel for order, and a hush falls over the chamber.

A REMOTE CAMERA floats by, WARBLING.

VIRAXO
Well, Antilles, what is so important it couldn’t wait until the normal session tomorrow morning?

Antilles says nothing, but looks at the Bailiff expectantly. Viraxo rolls his eyes and gestures impatiently at the Bailiff.

BAILIFF
The Emperor’s Proconsul recognizes the Honorable delegate of Alderaan, Senator Antilles.

SENATOR ANTILLES
Proconsul. Honorable Senators. Matters have come to my attention that could not wait for morning. Matters of the utmost import to the future of this assembly, if we do not wish to become mere puppets of the Emperor.

MURMURS OF DISAPPROVAL begin.

SENATOR ANTILLES (CONT'D)
Nay! I did not come here merely to cast stones at the Emperor's policies. I have come to offer evidence that the present Townowi crisis was engineered by agents of the Imperial military, in order to—

Antilles almost has to SHOUT to make himself heard over the RISING TUMULT of outraged Senators.

VIRAXO
(interrupting)
You dare accuse the Emperor of lying to the Senate?

SENATOR ANTILLES
I do not accuse anyone. But hear the evidence for yourselves, Senators! I present a decorated officer of long service and impeccable record, Admiral Mede of the Imperial Navy.

Antilles steps back from the center of his congressional box and a hologram of Admiral Mede appears. The chamber grows instantly silent.

MEDE
Honorable Senators, please excuse my unorthodox presence here. It is not usual for a serving military officer to appear before the Senate, and I have not made my decision lightly. I may very well be court-martialed for my actions here today, regardless of the outcome, but I believe it is worth the cost.

As Mede begins to speak, Viraxo first watches with stunned disbelief. But soon he begins to WHISPER very urgently into a communications pad on the rostrum.

MEDE (CONT'D)
Senators, you have been lied to. And these lies have led to the unjust and unprovoked war upon one of the

sovereign worlds of the Empire. I speak of Townowi, whose people have been hunted down and slaughtered by ships of the Imperial Navy. I myself have participated in this slaughter, to my everlasting shame. I come before you now to expose the treachery that led to Townowi's betrayal. Beginning with the destruction of the Academy Shuttle, not by supposed Rebel agents, as you were told, but by order of Darth Vader--

Mede is forced to stop as the Senate ERUPTS INTO PANDEMONIUM.

Viraxo glares around him, as if identifying each senator who is betraying the Emperor's cause.

He cannot count them all.

FADE OUT.

END OF ACT SIX

ACT SEVEN

FADE IN:

EXT. SPACE – ABOVE BESTINE

Most of the Union repair vessels have left the Imperial blockade. All is tranquil.

INT. BESTINE- *REFUGEE-ONE* HANGAR BAY - COMM CENTER – TWILIGHT

In the Comm Center of the *Refugee-One* hangar bay, Tet Destri, her arm in a sling, stares at a monitor in amazement. Beside her are Efdee, R1-Comm, several TOWNOWI OFFICERS, and Provost Sevas.

ON MONITOR as the Imperial Senate is ROARING their own disbelief. SHIFT to the translucent hologram of Admiral Mede. Through him, WE SEE Senator Antilles.

BACK TO MAIN.

DESTRI
I can't believe it.

Efdee WHISTLES an agreement.

PROVOST SEVAS
That man is insane.

DESTRI
That man is defecting.

R1-COMM
(listening to a headset)
Captain Bulloc has just been ordered to storm the hangars.

Destri turns to the Provost.

PROVOST SEVAS
Get your pilots to their ships. We'll hold the Imperials off.

R1-COMM
The *Interdictor* is still in orbit. And it's fully operational. Antilles' plan must have failed.

DESTRI
Move. We're going anyway.

ON MONITOR as the image of Admiral Mede flickers out. All exit.

INT. STAR DESTROYER *ATONEMENT* – DETENTION LEVEL

Darth Vader strides through the *Atonement*'s detention level, making for the turbolift elevators. He reignites his saber.

INT. STAR DESTROYER *ATONEMENT* – ADMIRAL'S QUARTERS

Admiral Mede rises to leave his quarters. When he gets to his door, he reaches for a comlink. His voice ECHOES throughout the ship.

MEDE
(amplified)
This is Admiral Titus Mede. I have decided to defect from the Empire and I am taking the *Atonement* with me. Anyone under my command who does not agree with my decision, proceed to the docking bay and board whatever vessels you can find. You may flee to the ISD *Reprisal*. You have my promise that the *Atonement* will not fire upon your vessels.

INT. STAR DESTROYER *ATONEMENT* – SUBSECTION – NEAR HANGAR BAY

Captain Veeja and Bre are running through a subsection of the Star Destroyer near the hangar bay as Mede relays his final command.

They turn a corner and face a squadron of Imperial Naval Troopers. They skid to a halt. Veeja steps in front of Chori Bre.

One by one, the Naval Troopers salute the Captain.

NAVAL TROOPERS
(in unison)
Captain.

Veeja can't help but smile.

MEDE (V.O.)
To all other capital ships under my command. Leave the Bestine system immediately or risk becoming my enemy. Mede out.

EXT. BESTINE – PROVISIONAL REFUGEE HANGAR ARRAY – NIGHT

The Provisional Refugee Hangar Array has become a battleground. Stormtroopers blast away at Bestine Security Officers, who return fire. The force fields have been thrown down.

OVERHEAD TIE Fighters fire on the open bays of the hangar array, while Bestine Cloud Cars fire upon them. The TIE Fighters loop around to target the Cloud Cars.

A Cloud Car is split in half by laserfire, each Car separating from the other and spiraling down to IMPACT on the sloping sides of the array. Another wing of TIE Fighters SCREAM out of the night sky and open fire on the first TIE Fighters.

DOWN BELOW, Provost Sevas and a Security Officer see this exchange.

PROVOST SEVAS
Those are Mede’s men.

The Townowi convoy vessels shoot out of the bays towards the atmosphere. A slower Cruiser is tailed by two TIEs.

Refugee-One breaks through the smoke and fires. The TIE Fighters chasing the Cruiser EXPLODE.

REFUGEE-ONE (V.O.)
Free to proceed, TDF Cruiser.

The convoy vessels engage their sublight engines at maximum.

EXT. SPACE – ABOVE BESTINE - ON THE ISD *RESPRISAL*

drifting along its position in the Imperial blockade.

INT. STAR DESTROYER *REPRISAL* – BRIDGE

The hologram of Captain Bulloc appears on the bridge of the Star Destroyer *Reprisal*. He addresses his BRIDGE COMMANDER.

BULLOC

Open fire on Admiral Mede at once, Commander!

BRIDGE COMMANDER
But, sir, Lord Vader is still aboard the *Atonement*.

BULLOC
Move to protect the *Interdictor*, then. As soon as Vader clears Mede's vessel, rip it apart!

BRIDGE COMMANDER
That shouldn't be too hard, Captain. They are still suffering major shield damage. It will be no contest.

INT. STAR DESTROYER *ATONEMENT* – BRIDGE

The Admiral is back on the bridge of the *Atonement*.

MEDE
(to Technician)
I heard it. Intensify our starboard shields as best you can. And then fire.

EXT. SPACE BATTLE – ABOVE BESTINE

The Townowi convoy has cleared the planet's atmosphere, TIE Fighters in hot pursuit.

The *Atonement* fires its turbolasers at the *Reprisal*. The side of the other Star Destroyer suffers a STRING OF HEAVY EXPLOSIONS. The *Resprisal* PITCHES and begins to move into attack position.

REFUGEE-ONE (V.O.)
ISD *Atonement*, this is *Refugee-One*. We are approaching at all speed.

MEDE (V.O.)
Commander Destri, form up behind my destroyer. We will provide what protection we can.

INT. STAR DESTROYER *ATONEMENT* – SUBSECTION – NEAR HANGAR BAY

Veeja and his men are pinned down by Vader's stormtrooper squad firing out from the hangar bay.

Bre is hiding behind a pylon. One of Veeja's Naval Troopers falls dead. Bre snatches up his blaster and fires into the bay. Veeja tries to back away from the action, making for a nearby communications console.

Vader enters. His lightsaber strikes Veeja down.

Bre spins and fires at Vader, who deflects the blaster bolt away with his lightsaber. It hits a Naval Trooper, who flies backwards into his comrades. The other Naval Troopers turn to face Vader, blasting away. He deflects every shot. Between Vader and the stormtroopers in the hangar bay, the Naval Troopers are caught in a crossfire.

Vader uses the Force to pull Bre's blaster from her hand. It sails over his shoulder and behind him as he strides forward.

Vader grabs Bre by the hair and pulls her into the hangar, casually deflecting the attacks of the Naval Troopers with the lightsaber in his free hand.

VADER
(to himself)
We only need one of them.

INT. STAR DESTROYER *ATONEMENT* – HANGAR BAY

Vader drags Bre into the hangar bay, making for his Shuttle. His stormtroopers fire past him into the subsection beyond.

The Long Haul crew members still present take positions behind cargo crates, underneath other Shuttles, and behind pylons, and then open fire on Vader's stormtroopers.

Now the stormtroopers are caught in a different crossfire.

Out of Bre's Shuttle Two-Tau appears. He rushes at Darth Vader. Vader sees the Combat Droid and drops Bre. He uses the Force to push the droid backwards, its laser cannons firing wildly into the hangar ceiling.

Bre tries to scramble away, but Vader lifts a hand. She falls to her knees, choking.

ENDIGO (O.S.)
That old trick?

TURN WITH VADER to see Shen Endigo. The mercenary stands fearlessly as blaster bolts fly all around him.

VADER
Shen.

Bre catches her breath and falls unconscious. Two-Tau moves toward her. A LASER BLAST catches him in the shoulder, but he bends to pick Bre up anyway. The droid carries her OFF-SCREEN.

BACK TO ENDIGO AND VADER as Shen activates his own lightsaber. It emerges from the back of his cybernetic arm. The two warriors raise their sabers into guard positions.

ENDIGO
Want me to still call you master, or should we forget that whole mess ever happened?

INT. STAR DESTROYER *ATONEMENT* – BRIDGE

Admiral Mede watches from the bridge of the *Atonement* as the *Reprisal* takes another hit.

MEDE
Send our fighters to protect the convoy.

TECHNICIAN
They're way ahead of you, sir.

MEDE
Does the *Interdictor* still have her gravity-well projectors online?

TECHNICIAN
Yessir. Hyperspace is not an option.

Mede shakes his head in disappointment.

MEDE
(to himself)
I had hoped Captainn Andros might at least not interfere.

REFUGEE-ONE (V.O.)
Mede, we're going to help you with the *Reprisal*. We owe it to them.

MEDE
I would suggest targeting the *Interdictor*, Commander Destri. She's still keeping us here.

A CLATTER OF BOOTS is heard OFF-SCREEN.

TURN WITH MEDE as he sees Hulda Caulp and Skahtul in the open doorway of a turbolift elevator. Bridge Security Officers have their blaster carbines leveled at the pirates.

HULDA CAULP
With your permission, sir, I have a better idea.

Skahtul bats the nearest Bridge Security Officer's blaster carbine away and GROWLS.

MEDE
Who are you, sir?

HULDA CAULP
Technically we're Alliance operatives. I'm first mate on that space-tug out there.

Hulda points out beyond the bridge viewscreens.

MEDE
(without looking)
I'm listening.

INT. STAR DESTROYER *ATONEMENT* – HANGAR BAY

Endigo and Vader are locked in battle, their lightsabers WARPING and SIZZLING against each other.

The stormtroopers are all dead. Endigo's crewmates watch their leader fretfully. It becomes obvious that Endigo is no match for the Sith Lord. Vader batters him back with ease.

VADER
I suggest we continue this another time.

ENDIGO
Oh no we won't.

Their sabers CLASH. Vader pushes Endigo away.

VADER
As you wish.

Vader feints, and then cleaves Endigo's human arm off.

Endigo falls, GROANING but smiling still. He SWITCHES OFF his lightsaber and then presses a button on his chest, which triggers a PRESSURE SOUND. Endigo feels the anesthetics kick in.

ENDIGO
(still prone)
That's better.

Vader strikes down at him but Endigo is too quick, reigniting his blade and parrying.

ENDIGO (CONT'D)
Again with the <u>arm</u> thing.

VADER
You never learn.

ENDIGO
Really?

Shen uses the Force to push Vader back, so he can rise to his feet.

ENDIGO
Learned that one first day out.

They lock in combat again.

EXT. SPACE BATTLE – ABOVE BESTINE

The vessels of the Townowi convoy are spread out in a pattern around the *Reprisal* and the *Interdictor*, blasting away. All around them TIE fighters of different loyalties dogfight each other.

INT. *REFUGEE-ONE* – BRIDGE

Destri watches her tactical vidscreen, at the blips that represent the battle. She is smiling triumphantly. Then a BLINKING SERIES OF RED BLIPS appear on the grid before her, far away from the action at hand.

DESTRI
Reinforcements. Twenty clicks out.

R1-COMM
I'm reading *Carrack*--class heavy cruisers and a couple of Nebulon-B's.

DESTRI
(into a comlink)
All Townowi vessels disengage and look at your tactical grids. I'm guessing we have around fifteen minutes.

R1-COMM
Give or take.

INT. STAR DESTROYER *ATONEMENT* – BRIDGE

Mede and the Technician are watching Hulda as the mercenary pulls a datapad from his hip. He begins to type in some commands.

HULDA CAULP
Thing about navicomputers is that they mean well.

He continues to type.

HULDA CAULP (CONT'D)
You can override their automatic safety measures, though.

TECHNICIAN
You can?

HULDA CAULP
Sure. Hyperspace approval is just your astrogation computer's way of being polite. Sometimes, though--

TECHNICIAN
But the *Interdictor* won't let your vessel--

HULDA CAULP
It won't let my tug <u>enter</u> hyperspace. But it can't prevent its hyperdrives from actually <u>trying</u>--
(tapping out a final sequence)
Watch.

EXT. SPACE BATTLE – ABOVE BESTINE - ON *THE LONG HAUL*

as its hyperspace engines engage. Its hull elongates into a blur of velocity, accelerating to faster-than-light. Headed straight for the *Interdictor*.

Both ships EXPLODE IN A MASSIVE FIREBALL.

INT. STAR DESTROYER *ATONEMENT* – BRIDGE

The bridge of the *Atonement* SHAKES VIOLENTLY. Its viewscreens are white with the explosion outside. Mede is impressed.

MEDE
Good work..?

HULDA CAULP
Hulda.

MEDE
(into a command console)
Townowi convoy, you are free and clear.

REFUGEE-ONE (V.O.)
Admiral?

MEDE
Yes, Commander?

REFUGEE-ONE (V.O.)
Prepare to have the coordinates to the Rebel Base beamed to your destroyer.

MEDE
With pleasure, Miss Destri.

INT. STAR DESTROYER *ATONEMENT* – HANGAR BAY

Endigo has backed away from Vader, stumbling back from the blast outside. His lightsaber begins to FLICKER IN AND OUT, until he BANGS it on a cargo crate. Vader advances slowly. Endigo holds up his hand and cocks his head.

ENDIGO
Wait. Sure. Hyperspace in how long?

Endigo nods and smiles.

ENDIGO (CONT'D)
The question is: how bad do you <u>really</u> want to see the Rebel Base, Lord Vader?

Vader halts.

ENDIGO (CONT'D)
I suggest we continue this another time.

Beat.

Vader turns to his Shuttle and boards.

INT. STAR DESTROYER *REPRISAL* – BRIDGE

KLAXON ALARMS overpower the bridge of the Star Destroyer *Reprisal*. The Bridge Commander stares at a hologram of his Star Destroyer's damage readouts, sweating.

MEDE (V.O.)
ISD *Reprisal*, this is the-- Rebel Alliance— and we are demanding your surrender.

BRIDGE COMMANDER
(sighing)
Thank you, sir.

EXT. SPACE – ABOVE BESTINE

The *Reprisal* retreats from the Townowi convoy and Mede's destroyer. Its fighters break off and head back to its hangar bays.

Vader's Shuttle leaves the *Atonement* and sets its course for the *Reprisal*. All other vessels move into a tight formation.

INT. STAR DESTROYER *ATONEMENT* – BRIDGE

Mede and the others watch Captain Bulloc's vessel disengage. Hulda talks into his wrist radio.

HULDA CAULP
Shen, we're out of here.

MEDE
(glancing back)
Send along my regrets about his ship, Hulda.

Hulda lifts up his wrist.

ENDIGO (V.O.)
That's all right. This one's better.

MEDE
Yes, sir. I believe you'll grow to like her very much.
(into a command console)
Destri?

REFUGEE-ONE (V.O.)
Yes, Admiral?

MEDE
Where exactly are we going?

REFUGEE-ONE (V.O.)
Dantooine.

INT. VADER'S SHUTTLE

From inside his Shuttle, Vader watches the Townowi convoy vessels and the *Atonement* form up. He watches as they enter into hyperspace.

FADE OUT.

END OF ACT SEVEN

ACT EIGHT

FADE IN:

EXT. SPACE – UNKNOWN SECTOR

The Townowi convoy and the *Atonement* are in a tight formation in another uncharted sector of the galaxy. The *Refugee-One* is docked with Mede's Star Destroyer.

INT. STAR DESTROYER *ATONEMENT* – POWER CORE

Admiral Mede is alone with the body of Captain Veeja in the destroyer's power core. The ceiling of the power core room is lost in darkness. Long cylindrical incinerators line the

core like pillars. Veeja's body is on a slab near the mouth of a flaming chamber.

Mede says something silently to his former captain and then kisses him on the forehead. He presses a button and the slab enters the incinerator. A grate lowers over the mouth of the chamber.

TURN WITH MEDE to see the power core lined with all the Imperial Officers that have defected with Admiral Mede. There are many. Among them are new faces, crewmates from the *The Long Haul*, and officers from the Townowi Defense Force. Tet Destri is among them. Mede walks up to her.

DESTRI
Why do I sense this somehow goes against Navy tradition?

MEDE
Captain Veeja was afraid of space, Miss Destri. He made me swear.

Mede exits.

INT. STAR DESTROYER *ATONEMENT* – MED LAB

Chori Bre awakes in the *Atonement's* med lab to a PULSING SOUND. The med lab is stark white, graying in the corners. Bre sits up on her foam bed, feeling her neck. A HIGH-PITCHED DRILLING SOUND draws her attention to the left.

TURN TO ENDIGO as a 21-B MEDICAL DROID drills into the mechanical joint-servos of his new arm. ANOTHER MEDICAL DROID, this one all legs and pinchers, waddles over holding a swath of synthetic flesh.

ENDIGO
Nope. I want it like this.

He lifts his cybernetic arm and twists it at the elbow 360 degrees.

TOO-ONE BEE
Hold on, sir. I haven't got to that part yet.

ENDIGO
Naw, I kinda like that.
(noticing Bre)
Hey, kid.

BRE
Hey.

ENDIGO
You feeling okay?

BRE
Neck. It was you that saved me, huh?

ENDIGO
(spinning his new arm again)
No problem.

TOO-ONE BEE
Are you sure, sir? No coverings? Very discreet.

ENDIGO
Absolutely. Thanks, though.

BRE
Why don't you want it? You look kinda—

ENDIGO
(interrupting)
Scary? I'm going for that.

Bre takes a good long look at him.

BRE
Well, what you're getting is 'droid.'

Two-Tau emerges from OFF-SCREEN.

TWO-TAU
Hetchka! Bo-yadda.

BRE
(to Endigo)
Where are we? I mean, what system?

ENDIGO

We're in a clean sector, waiting to jump to Dantooine. We're off the charts. Prehistoric strategy to keep trajectory profilers way off base.

Bre nods like that makes sense enough for her. She gets off her bed and reaches for her flight vest. She looks out a port hole and into space. When she looks behind her, Two-Tau and Endigo are using her vacant bed as an arm-wrestling bench.

ENDIGO (CONT'D)
By the way, the Empire has left your home planet. In case you wanted to go back.

BRE
Can I stay?

ENDIGO
(losing)
I don't run things around here, sweetie. I'm just—
(beaten but smiling)
--I'm just here for the hyperbarides.

EXT. SPACE – DANTOOINE SYSTEM

One by one the Townowi refugees drop back into realspace, in the Dantooine system. The *Atonement* shortly follows.

Dantooine is nowhere to be seen, though a reddish moon is off in the distance.

A PATROL OF X- and Y-WINGS enter.

X-WING PILOT ONE (V.O.)
Welcome to the Dantooine system, Townowi. We're here to guide you to the hideout.

X-WING PILOT TWO (V.O.)
ISD *Atonement*, you have no idea how unnerving it is to have you in my sights.

INT. STAR DESTROYER *ATONEMENT* – BRIDGE

Mede, his Technician, Commander Destri, Hulda, and OTHER OFFICERS watch the Rebel pilots break into escort formation around the convoy.

TECHNICIAN
We have General Madine on the line, sir.

MEDE
(to Destri)
Crix Madine?

Destri shrugs her shoulders.

MEDE (CONT'D)
He defected to the Rebellion....

MADINE (V.O.)
A long time ago. Wondered when you'd join, Titus. Veeja with you?

MEDE
Veeja is dead, General Madine.

MADINE (V.O.)
I'm sorry to hear that, Admiral. I'm also sorry to say that we don't have a space dock big enough for your Star Destroyer. We don't have a fleet large enough to require one yet.

MEDE
I understand. I haven't been planetside in years, anyway.

MADINE (V.O.)
I'll have a transponder team onboard the *Atonement* soon, to clean her signature right off the Imperial network.

HULDA CAULP

Don’t bother, sir. I’ve already done that. The Empire won’t find us until we’re already on top of them.

MADINE (V.O.)
That makes things easier. So, Admiral Mede, you just want to jump right into things?

MEDE
Of course.

MADINE (V.O.)
Good. We have a situation in the Sullust system. An Imperial supply fleet needs to make a detour.

MEDE
Have the briefing report beamed to me at once, then.

MADINE
Done.
(beat)
Is Commander Destri with you?

DESTRI
Here, General.

MADINE (V.O.)
Senator Kolomo is already here with us.

Pause. A STATIC CHANGE in channels.

SENATOR KOLOMO (V.O.)
Destri, have you heard about Townowi?

DESTRI
Yes, Senator. That’s great news. Several of our people already want to return.

SENATOR KOLOMO (V.O.)
I’ll make the necessary arrangements. The officers and their families can be there in days. That includes you, too, Commander.

Mede looks at Destri. Destri looks back at the comlink.

DESTRI
Captain, Senator. Captain Destri of the ISD *Atonement*. I'm not going back to Townowi. I'll be busy in the Sullust system for quite some time.

EXT. SPACE – DANTOOINE SYSTEM

The Rebel starfighters zoom by as the convoy speeds further into the Dantooine system and OFF-SCREEN.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. SPACE – ABOVE CORUSCANT

ESTABLISHING SHOT of the Imperial capital.

MEDE (V.O)
Why did we do it, Vader?
(beat)
I really don't understand at all. Those Townowi boys were joining the Empire, they were--

VADER (V.O. - interrupting)
They were rebel spies!

INT. IMPERIAL SENATE - DELEGATION CHAMBER – SUNRISE

In the Delegation Chamber of Senator Antilles, Viraxo stands near the window, watching the sun make its way up from the broken horizon. Patches of gray light begin to reveal the city without end.

TURN WITH VIRAXO to stare at Senator Antilles, seated at his desk, a finger above his console recorder. Imperial Stormtroopers are to either side of the elder senator's chair, blasters out. Four other Internal Security Agents and the Imperial Advisor are present in the chamber as well.

The Imperial Advisor unfolds a datapad and begins to type out a few commands.

VIRAXO
Who else has this transmission?

SENATOR ANTILLES
Anyone that I want to have it.

VIRAXO
(frowning)
Is it the age, Antilles? Your age, I mean, not Palpatine's regime. Is it knowing that you are not long for this world that gives you such courage?

SENATOR ANTILLES
Courage, Viraxo? Courage is Mon Mothma, out there, hiding from you, hurting you, making you jump at the shadows. Courage is the men and women that help her, growing every day. What you see from me is not that. I am just an idiot, really. That's what the age does to you, Viraxo. It gives you the delusion that you can do anything from this place, in that Assembly out there. It makes you wonder if there might be some hope that the galaxy will remember the Old Republic-- the same way an old man does.

VIRAXO
We have withdrawn from Townowi. I trust that Alderaan will spearhead the Senate's mercy missions to that system. You always do.

SENATOR ANTILLES
We will. I am sure the Mining Guild has their own way of getting due compensation for the damage done to Bestine.

VIRAXO
Oh, yes. Their bureaucrats have managed to force Captain Bulloc into an early

retirement. And the Imperial Navy's Office of Logistics and Supply are overseeing the renovations of the Bestine spaceport.

SENATOR ANTILLES
What about Vader?

VIRAXO
Darth Vader is unaffiliated with the Imperial Navy, Senator, as you well know. As soon as he has given his deposition to the Courts he will be on his way to the Emperor's palace.

SENATOR ANTILLES
Not when the Courts hear this.

The Imperial Advisor shuts his datapad with a LOUD SNAP. Antilles and Viraxo look over to him. The Imperial Advisor nods to Viraxo.

VIRAXO
Hear what?
(beat)
I wouldn't bother with that anymore, Senator. It's gone.

Senator Antilles stares at Viraxo for a span, then flips the cover switch over the button to his console recorder. The game is over.

Viraxo (CONT'D)
You <u>will</u> slip one day, Antilles.

Viraxo and his agents begin to exit.

SENATOR ANTILLES
So will the Emperor.

INT. STAR DESTROYER *ATONEMENT* – ADMIRAL'S QUARTERS

Mede is in his quarters, seated at his desk looking over his latest mission briefing. A TRILLING SOUNDS indicates he has a visitor.

MEDE
(not looking up)
Come in.

The doors to his quarters SWISH open and then close.

Chori Bre stands before the Admiral. She tries not to seem too interested in the items on display, but she can't help herself.

BRE
This stuff is pretty neat. You've been at this awhile, huh? That's a *Victory*-class Destroyer. Blissex designed that.

Mede looks up at her, unsure of why she's here.

BRE (CONT'D)
Um. Someone said if I was going to join your Rebel cell I'd <u>have</u> to talk to <u>you</u> first.

Mede sits back in his chair.

BRE (CONT'D)
<u>Okay</u>. I'm good with droids and vehicles. That Combat Droid won't leave me alone? That used to be one of <u>your</u> guys. And, you know, I can pilot snubfighters, freighters, transports, whatever. My father--

Mede looks back to the vidscreen on his desk. Bre frowns, thinking herself dismissed. She absently begins to tap a foot.

MEDE
The Sullust Operation mission briefing is in ten minutes. Subsection eighteen.

INT. STAR DESTROYER *ATONEMENT* - SUBSECTION EIGHTEEN

Captain Destri, Bre, Two-Tau, assorted Naval Troopers, Townowi Pilots, and Endigo's men are gathered around a large holoprojector. Shen Endigo is sitting on a high chair

to the side of the projector.

A GREEN DISPLAY OF THE SULLUST SYSTEM APPEARS, and CLICKS closer to a small moon surrounded by Tibanna gas platforms.

A Fuel-Sphere train grows from a small floating point into a fully vector rendition in scale to the Sullust moon. A scrolling readout plays along the train's hull.

Endigo pushes a button, and more dots appear, all around the Fuel-Sphere train. They grow into Imperial Dreadnaughts and their TIE escorts.

He gives the others time to look over the situation.

Beat.

ENDIGO
All right, people. Short version.

IRIS OUT.

END TITLES.

THE END